



Voice

Today's Youth Tomorrow's Future

44,000 Students Vote Online

Turnout in Many Areas Tops Adults!

As registered voters in central Ohio stepped up to precinct tables, signed in, and cast their votes – more than 44,000 students followed the same process to voice their opinions on candidates for city councils and school boards, levies, and state issues! More than 200 schools participated in the 2005 Kids Voting Online Election.

In many districts, Kids Voting student turnout topped 50 percent, far surpassing the adult turnout. Big Walnut schools in Delaware County saw student turnout at over 70 percent.

Preparations for the Kids Voting project began early. Meetings with district media specialists and teachers helped to spread the word about the online project. Kids Voting provided lessons and resources for teachers to assist their students in researching the candidates, races, and issues.

Our first ever online voting project generated creative collaborations between classroom teachers and school librarians and media specialists. Students took part in activities about voting, completed "voter registration" forms, and learned about the individual candidates and the offices they sought. Libraries and media centers were turned into polling locations with flags, banners, and, most importantly, voters. "I Voted" stickers were worn proudly by students in grades K-12.

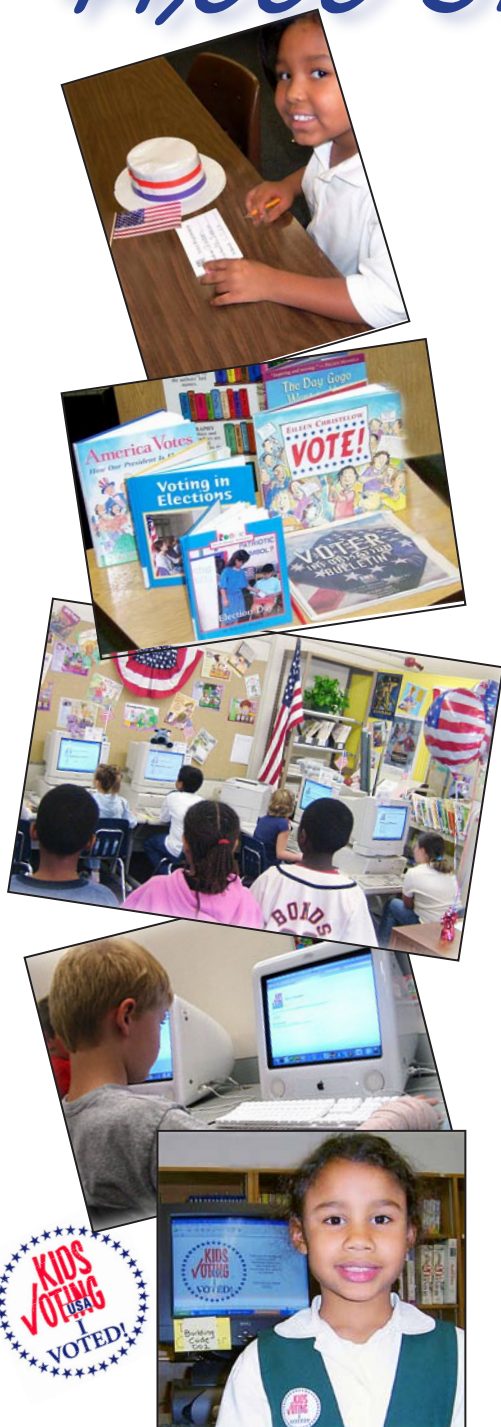
According to Louise Carter, Library Specialist at Huy Road Elementary School in Columbus, one of the main benefits of the project was that the students were actively involved with each other and their parents – discussing the candidates, school levies, and state issues.

One principal said she knew how successful it was when an eighth grade student came back to school from being at PALS (a discipline intervention program) and the first thing he wanted to know was whether he missed voting. The principal told him to go to the library right away and vote, and he happily went. He was so concerned that he would miss out on the fun!

Another teacher observed that the voter registration process was the first time many students filled out an application themselves. "It was a good opportunity to teach several life skills, such as filling out an application, thinking about the privileges of a democracy and exercising our rights and responsibilities as citizens."

Kids Voting Executive Director Suzanne Helmick indicated that the online voting pilot project was a success. "More students voted in this election than in the last two elections combined. This approach connected many more students to their future roles as effective, active voters."

See inside for the Kids Voting results.



Fresh Faces Greet Voters



On November 8th, thousands of Franklin County voters were greeted by one of 300 high school students who joined the ranks of dedicated poll officials through "Youth at the Booth" -- a partnership between Kids Voting Central Ohio, the Board of Elections, and 21 local high schools.

Thanks to the passage of House Bill 234, sponsored by State Rep. Larry Wolpert, these students will be joined next election by hundreds more of their peers, as 17-year-old high school seniors also will be eligible to work as paid poll officials.

Franklin County Board of Elections Director Matt Damschroder

was delighted with the results of Youth at the Booth. Seasoned poll workers from across the county complimented the students' performance. Charley Mueller, working at a poll in Upper Arlington, called student Courtney Klamar "pleasant, informed, useful, and fun!"

According to Damschroder, "The high school students were just as we expected them to be -- energetic and enthusiastic and ready to learn and help wherever they could. This year's start has been a great success on which we plan to build a dynamic program for the future."

Watch the Kids Voting website for information on Youth at the Booth opportunities for the May primary.

Issue and Levy Votes		
Issue	Yes %	No %
State Issue 1	70	30
State Issue 2	60	40
State Issue 3	51	49
State Issue 4	54	46
State Issue 5	59	41
ADAMH Levy	72	28
Delaware Co. JVSD Levy	74	26
Big Walnut Levy	85	15
Gahanna Smoking Ban	87	13
Westerville Levy	82	18
Worthington Library Levy	73	27

Dublin Park Name	Emerald Park 55%
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Top Candidates in Contested Races				
Big Walnut Bd. Ed.	Grunewald	Martin	Hobelman	Turner
Canal Win. City Cnsl.	Steube	Deeds	Bender	
Columbus Bd. Ed.	Bryson	Drummond	Wiles	
Columbus City Cnsl.	Boyce	Clark	Hudson	Lecklider
Dublin Bd. Ed.	Burton	May	Callender	
Dublin City Counsel	Boring	Salay	Bond	
Gahan/Jeff. Bd. Ed.	Carson	Yoder	Anderson	Payne
Gahanna City Cnsl.	McAlister	Culp	Evers	
Hilliard Bd. Ed.	Bobbitt	Mueller	Teater	
Sunbury Village Cnsl.	Hatfield	Shaw	Bishop	Zalewski
Westerville Bd. Ed.	Hoffman	Collins	Simms	Highfield
Westerville City Cnsl.	Cocuzzi	Gonzales	Heyeck	
Worthington City Cnsl.	Butterfield	Duffey	Chapman	

Kids Voting 2005 Election Results

Area students voted for reform, passing all five of the state issues. Students also supported school levies by convincing majorities. Listed here are the Kids Voting results for the major contested races. Complete results can be found at:

<http://www.cyberbee.com/kidsvoting/results.html>.



Teacher Workshop Highlights Media Literacy

Nearly 100 area teachers converged on Dublin Scioto High School August 2nd and 3rd to learn more about media literacy – a vital skill for an informed electorate. Speakers, panel discussions, and breakout sessions focused on the ways advertising, newspapers, television, and websites select and present information on everything from product offerings to news and elections to influence the public.

Teachers were able to take with them standards-based lessons designed to help build students' skills in evaluating sources of information.

The elections and new voting technology were the focus of other sessions. Franklin

County Board of Elections Director Matt Damschroder led a session in which teachers tried out new voting technology and talked about voting reform.

For many teachers, a high point of the workshop was the visit to one of the three local TV newsrooms to see the noon news broadcast live. This visit followed a panel discussion by local news producers who had explained how stations choose and position news stories on air.

Thanks go to our workshop co-sponsors, *The Columbus Dispatch*/10 TV and Time Warner's Cable in the Classroom program.



Workshop participants visited Channels 10, 6, and 4 to watch noon news broadcasts.

Watch the Kids Voting website for information on the 2006 summer workshop for educators!

Youth Summit Empowers Students

School Funding. Racism. Gas Prices. War. Poverty. Pollution.



These are just some of the issues on the minds of the 120 high school seniors who attended the **Kids Voting 2005 Youth Summit** on September 30th. The event was sponsored by Nationwide Insurance and Honda of America Mfg., Inc.

Students heard from elected officials including County Commissioner Dewey Stokes and Columbus City Councilwoman Charleta Tavares, but spent most of the day talking in small groups about issues of concern, then created action plans for addressing them. Students from the John Glenn Institute/Living Learning Program and 12 public policy professionals facili-

tated the action planning sessions, held at the Ohio Statehouse.

Participants left the event energized, with many teachers reporting that students discussed the program "all the way back to school" and in the days that followed. In pre- and post-event surveys, 25% more students believed that youth can have "a lot" of impact on public policy after the summit, and 97% said the event gave them useful ideas on how to become active on issues they care about.

Teachers and students in the Annenberg Civic Education Initiative also helped in planning and implementing the event.

Executive Director's Note

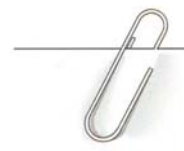
This has been a busy and rewarding fall for Kids Voting Central Ohio. We welcomed four new board members: John Buell from Limited Brands, Keith Bossard from the Columbus Public Schools, Marion Wright-Smith from Me2 Concepts, and Emerald Hernandez from the United Way of Central Ohio.

We gratefully acknowledge our newest major sponsor, the Limited Brands Foundation, and thank the SBC Excellerator Program for a technology grant, which was presented to Chair Lisa Bateson and me by SBC Ohio President Connie Browning.

Thanks also to the hundreds of dedicated educators who made our Election Day a success. Without their efforts, the 44,000 votes would not have been cast!

2006 will hold many exciting developments, including the results of the first phase of the OSU research on the impact of Kids Voting in the Columbus Schools.

Thank you to all of our sponsors, supporters and partners for helping us create a new generation of active, effective citizens!



Suzanne C. Helmick

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Kids Voting Staff

Suzanne Helmick, Executive Director
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Kids Voting Central Ohio

191 W. Nationwide Blvd., Suite 300-A

Columbus, OH 43215

614.224.3555

www.dispatch.com/kidsvoting

